

## Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority

### Access Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

5:30 PM

#### Virtual Presentation

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**CapMetro Employees:** Chad Ballentine, Brian Booth, Peter Breton, Kevin Conlan, Suzie Edrington, Roberto Gonzalez, Martin Kareithi, Julie Lampkin, Andrew Skabowski, Emmanuel Toutin, Edna Parra, Raul Vela, Chris Westbrook.

*Interpretation Services provided by Communication by Hand.*

**Committee Members:** Andrew Bernet, Glenda Born, Audrea Diaz, Mike Gorse, Tullos Horn, Paul Hunt, John McNabb.

**Public:** CBS Austin, Denise Dodd.

**Meeting called to order at 5:34 PM**

### Welcome / Introductions / Call to Order

*Chair Hunt*

**Tullos Horn** has been appointed to the committee. He is Deaf and works as a case manager for Travis County's Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

### Public Communications

**Glenda Born** mentions that they have encountered issues involving low GPS accuracy in the app. **Andrew Skabowski** responds and says that the Demand Response team will investigate, and that CapMetro is upgrading the dispatching software that they use, and that will have an impact in the future.

**Audrea Diaz** discusses how to improve the accessibility of the Blues on the Green pickup and drop-off location for MetroAccess. **Glenda Born** asks if there's a reason why a person can't request a different location than the designated one. **CapMetro Staff** explain that site evaluations happen on a regularly scheduled basis, but if the site has changed, they can re-evaluate pickup and drop-off locations earlier.

**Mike Gorse** reminds the committee that the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is looking for a member to serve as a representative from the committee. After a brief discussion amongst the members, it is decided that **Mike Gorse** will serve on the CAC.

### CMTA Fiscal Year 23 Budget Proposal

*Kevin Conlan, Deputy Chief Financial Officer*

**Kevin Conlan** outlined the community engagement calendar for the budget. He explains that CapMetro is currently sound and balanced with the budget, and that most of the high capital costs come from Project Connect, and that those costs will be reimbursed through Austin Transit Partnership (ATP).

**Paul Hunt** asks how 48% of CapMetro's operating expenses goes to purchased transportation. **Kevin Conlan** explains that purchased transportation pays for CapMetro's bus and paratransit services, which is contracted

through other companies, while the personnel category pays for CapMetro staff only, which is a much smaller part of CapMetro's operations.

**Glenda Born** asks about the ratio of boots-on-the-ground staff versus administrative staff. **CapMetro Staff** and **Glenda Born** discuss the number of staff in multiple departments, but no definitive ratio is agreed upon.

**Glenda Born** asks what the cost per ride is for paratransit and bus services. **Kevin Conlan** estimates for paratransit that the cost is about \$60 per ride, and explains that during the worst of the pandemic it hit anywhere from \$75 to \$90. He further estimated that a bus ride was previously \$5, and jumped to \$7 to \$9 per ride.

**Denise Dodd** asks about the property tax increase from Prop A and where that factors into the budget. **Kevin Conlan** explains that that money shows up in ATP's budget.

## **Operations Update**

*Andrew Skabowski, Chief Operating Officer*

**Andrew Skabowski** outlines that CapMetro is currently improving bus service and operations over multiple categories and has hired 285 operators since January. CapMetro's parts availability is not the best due to supply chain issues, and while CapMetro is short on mechanics, at some point in May the mechanics turned a corner on the backlog of work, and CapMetro is now hitting their goal for vehicle availability reliably.

**Denise Dodd** asks how CapMetro prioritizes backfilling routes that they cut due to low ridership during COVID. **Andrew Skabowski** explains that CapMetro is still currently shoring up the current services they provide before returning frequency to routes that have been cut. **Roberto Gonzalez** affirms that CapMetro is still shoring up the current service, and explains that during COVID, CapMetro not only lost overall service, but the patterns of the services needed by customers changed, and the Service Planning department does have a plan to improve the frequencies towards pre-covid services as needed.

**Mike Gorse** asks if pay has gone up for CapMetro operators, and **Andrew Skabowski** responds that yes, the base rate pre-COVID for operators was around \$18/hr, and now it is \$22/hr.

## **August Service Changes**

*Roberto Gonzalez; Director, Service Planning*

**Roberto Gonzalez** outlines the engagement process for service changes, CapMetro's current service levels, and CapMetro's expected service levels for the Fall. Next year, CapMetro is expecting to make minor changes to the majority of routes, combine a few routes that end in downtown, and bring on new services.

**Audrea Diaz** asked if Night Owl service was retained through the service changes, and **Roberto Gonzalez** confirmed.

**Glenda Born** asked if Roberto believes that WFH will continue to impact service. **Roberto Gonzalez** confirms but explains that the Austin area population is continuing to grow and so will CapMetro's ridership.

## **Fixed Route Services and Paratransit**

*Martin Kareithi; Director, Systemwide Accessibility*

**Martin Kareithi** explains how CapMetro administers their paratransit services, and how they match over to CapMetro's fixed-route services.

**Denise Dodd** asks how much time in advance you must schedule a pickup, and **Martin Kareithi** and **Glenda Born** explain that it is at latest 5pm the day before, and at the earliest, up to 3 days over the phone or 6 days over the internet.

**Mike Gorse** asks if the origin and destination points must be within the 3/4ths of a mile region of fixed route services, and **Chad Ballentine** and **Martin Kareithi** confirm that that is the case.

**Audrea Diaz** proposes that Pickup be expanded to the whole city, and **Chad Ballentine** explains that that CapMetro uses pickup to fill gaps and the fixed-route services to create city-wide services.

**Audrea Diaz** mentions that coach buses are sometimes being used for UT shuttles, and she has encountered operators that do not know how to operate the lifts for those buses. **CapMetro Staff** affirms that they will make an effort to train operators on how to use the coach buses correctly, and **Martin Kareithi** reminds **Audrea Diaz** that any time they encounter an issue of that sort to report it.

**Chair Hunt** asks for there to be a presentation on the conditional system for MetroAccess.

**Approval of the minutes** - Motion to approve by John McNabb / 2<sup>nd</sup> by Glenda Born. Passed with unanimous consent.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM.**